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Infra push can revive economy: RBI Guv

India's sinking economy can be salvaged by pumping big money into the infrastructure sector, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Monday. Addressing a CII event, Das urged India Inc to sharpen their focus on the infrastructure sector, as public sector investments alone won't lift the Covid-19-hit economy. He noted that the big push to mega projects like expressways and high-speed rail corridors can kickstart the economy

Parekh, Kotak for one-time loan revamp

Veteran bankers HDFC Chairman Deepak Parekh and Kotak Mahindra Bank chief Uday Kotak on Monday urged the RBI to consider a one-time restructuring of loans for the banking industry. Parekh also suggested that the loan moratorium should not be extended any further, as both individuals and companies are misusing the provision. "Please do not extend the moratorium, because even those who can pay are not paying," he added

₹4.8 lakh cr loans may turn bad this year

Loans worth a whopping ₹4.8 lakh crore may turn bad due to Covid-induced economic slowdown. This, however, is only the first estimate with revisions expected during the course of the year. According to RBI's Financial Stability Report, FY21 gross NPAs may increase to 12.5% in a baseline scenario from 8.5% in FY20. Total advances this fiscal may touch ₹110 lakh crore, which means gross bad loans could balloon to ₹13.5 lakh crore

Hospitality sector staring at ₹15L cr loss

India's tourism and hospitality sector could see losses to the tune of ₹15 lakh crore due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality said on Monday. With spike in cases all across the country, tourism supply chains have completely broken down and the sector is not expected to recover in the next five months. The apex body had earlier projected ₹5 lakh crore for the industry P10

1,01,465
Karnataka has 1L reasons to worry

With 61,819 active cases and counting, Karnataka now only second to Maharashtra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
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KARNATAKA on Monday crossed the one lakh-mark in its Covid-19 tally with the highest daily addition of 5,324 cases, pushing up the total to 1,01,465, making it only the fifth state in the country to cross the grim landmark after Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh.

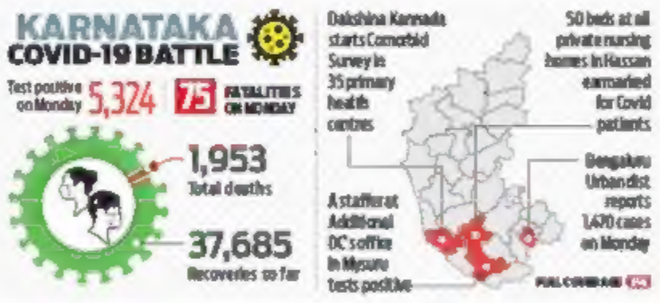
The state also stood second in the most number of active cases at 61,819 after Mahrashtra, which has 1,48,601 cases.

This is the fourth day in a row that Karnataka has added over 5,000 cases in a single day. While the state's ever-increasing positivity rate now stands at 8.41 per cent, on the brighter side, the mortality rate is steadily coming down, resting at 1.92 per cent, after having remained above 2 per cent from July 16 to July 24. With 75 deaths on Monday, the toll went up to 1,953.

There was a slight dip in recoveries with 1,847 patients discharged on Monday after recording over 2,000 discharges on each of the last four days. The state's recovery rate is now 37.14 per cent, but is still considered satisfactory despite dipping from 41.94 per cent on July 5 to 35.29 per cent on July 20. The total number of discharged patients stands at 37,685.

Bengaluru, which has been the main culprit in pushing up the state's Covid tally by adding more than 2,000 cases every day over the last few days, saw 1,470 cases on Monday. The city's recovery rate at 25.97 per cent is also far below the state's figures of 37.14 per cent. Bengaluru saw 784 discharges on Monday, bringing the total number of recovered patients to 12,189. The state capital's mortality rate at 1.95 per cent is slightly above that of the state's at 1.92 per cent. On Monday, the city saw 26 deaths, taking the toll to 917. Bengaluru Urban, with 46,923 cases, continues to top the districts with the highest tally, followed by Ballari with 4,930, Dakshina Kannada 4,925, Kalaburagi 4,495, and Udupi 3,612. MORE REPORTS: P4

A staffer checks the infrastructure at the country's biggest Covid Care Centre at the BIEC, which opened in Bengaluru on Monday | KAMARJA KAMKAL


KARNATAKA
COVID-19 BATTLE
Test positive on Monday 5,324
75 FATALITIES ON MONDAY
1,953
Total deaths
37,685
Recoveries so far
Dakshina Kannada starts Comorbid Survey in 35 primary health centres
50 beds at all private nursing homes in Hassan earmarked for Covid patients
A staffer at Additional DC's office in Mysuru tests positive
Bengaluru Urban dist reports 1,470 cases on Monday

TWIST IN RAJ DRAMA

Guv seeks 21-day notice before calling session

RAJESH ASNANI AND RICHA SHARMA @ Jaipur/New Delhi

AMID the ongoing drama over calling the Rajasthan Assembly session to deal with the Congress revolt, Governor Kalraj Mishra continued to play for time, asking the Ashok Gehlot government to provide a 21-day notice to convene the House.

Analysts saw in it an attempt to create more wriggle room for the BJP and Sachin Pilot, who is leading the 19 rebel lawmakers. Gehlot suggested July 31 as the date for the session to commence.

Mishra wondered if a trust vote would be part of the House agenda, since Gehlot's communication to him was silent on it, though the CM was talking about it in public. Mishra also wanted to know the plan to maintain social distancing during the session because of the pandemic.

With the Governor refusing to follow the Congress timeline, the party reacted sharply. While AICC incharge Avinash Pandey called it 'anti-democratic', new state party chief G S Dotasra sought to pin down the Governor, saying four of five sessions have happened with less than 10-day notice.

"I spoke with the PM yesterday and told him about the behaviour of the Governor," Gehlot reportedly told a party meeting.

Earlier in the day, the Pilot camp suffered a jolt when the Rajasthan High Court rejected a petition of a BJP MLA questioning the merger of the six BSP MLAs with the Congress last year. P7

Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot during 'Save Democracy-Save Constitution' protest, at a hotel in Jaipur on Monday | PTI

No Tipu Sultan in Covid-hit Class 7 syllabus

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA
@Bengaluru

THE Karnataka Text Book Society (KTBS) has deleted a chapter on two of Karnataka's most prominent rulers - Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan - in addition to the historical places of Mysuru from the Class VII Social Science syllabus, citing lack of time due to the Covid pandemic.

The KTBS, under the Department of Public Instruction, has stated that Powerpoint presentations "can be made" on these topics to introduce students to Mysuru history.

Estimating the working days for the academic year 2020-21, the portions have been revised and curtailed. KTBS also released a handbook for social science teachers for Classes 6 to 10 to teach the portions in 120 days, starting September 1. This was among the handbooks for other subjects.

The handbook mentions that 'religions, architecture, aculpture and folklore of Tulunadu' will be deleted, as teachers need to focus on more important subjects. P5

47 CLONES

India bans another set of Chinese apps

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

BARELY a month after banning 59 Chinese applications, India has restricted another fresh set of 47 apps, most of which are clones of the apps banned in June.

While the government did not immediately release the names of the 47 apps, sources said the new list includes Tiktok Lite, Helo Lite, SHAREit Lite and BIGO LIVE Lite. Sources said India is closely monitoring another 250 Chinese apps over user privacy and national security issues. The popular Tencent-backed gaming app PUBG and apps linked to Alibaba make the list.

If PUBG is banned, it will be a big blow for Chinese tech firms, as it is one of the most downloaded apps in India.

Homegrown app makers have welcomed the ban. Chingari App CEO Sumit Ghosh said Indians need to be concerned about data.

BSY: Could have achieved more if not for Covid-19

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IN a 116-page booklet that he referred to as the report card of his government's performance, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Monday detailed his government's journey in the past year. Joining him via video-conference from Ramanagara was Deputy Chief Minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan, and from Bagalkot was Deputy Chief Minister Govind Karjol, who highlighted Yediyurappa's achievements as Chief Minister.

The pan-Karnataka digital event saw ministers releasing the booklet titled 'Savalugala Varsha, Pariharada Sparsha' (Healing touch to a year of challenges) at their respective district headquarters. Deputy CM Laxman Savadi, however, was missing from the celebrations as he was in New Delhi.

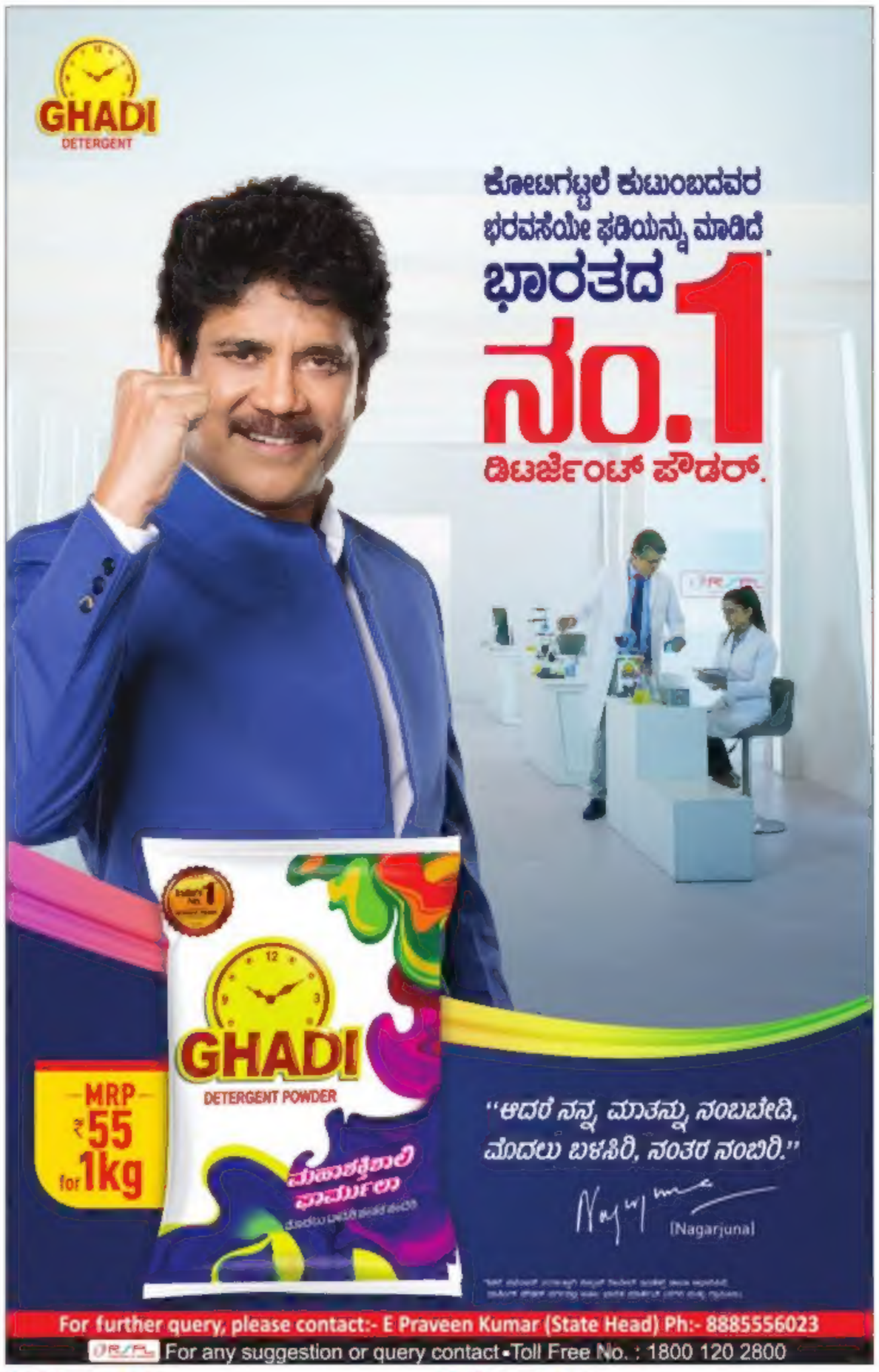
"Despite several challenges, our government has ensured that the wheel of development does not halt. Despite the worst floods in 118 years, a pandemic, financial setback, losses in taxes etc, my government has the responsibility of ensuring that people are not troubled," Yediyurappa said.

The achievements of his government – whether policy changes to help farmers, industries or compensation to various sections suffering due to drought, floods and the lockdown – are despite the Covid-19 situation, he added.

He also listed out relief provided – ₹207 crore to 2 lakh families affected by floods, ₹7 lakh as compensation to the kin of those who lost their lives in floods, ₹911.28 crore for houses, and ₹1,185.40 crore as crop compensation to farmers. He added that an economic package of ₹2,272 crore was announced for Covid lockdown relief.

From the APMC Act, Land Reforms Act, to amendments to Labour and Factories Act, Yediyurappa said that his government's decisions have been pro-poor and pro-farmer.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa looks at the booklet, Savalugala Varsha, Pariharada Sparsha, in Bengaluru on Monday | SUDHAKAR M



Big mental health crisis stares UP in the face

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

DAYS after he returned from Surat as part of the migrant exodus, Sukesh Kant, 50, who hails from Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri district, tried to end his life by jumping in front of a train. Luckily, he was saved. His job at a textile mill in Surat was the sole source of sustenance. Then lockdown happened, the mill was closed and he lost his job. With a family of eight, he was in dire straits.

In Kanpur Dehat, Brijendra Gupta tried to commit suicide by drinking pesticide, but was saved. He had been working as a security guard in Delhi, but lost his job, and was forced to return home. His family of seven includes four children and an ailing mother. He said though there was wheat and rice at home bought from the ration shop, he was unable to buy other essentials and medicines for his mother.

Sukesh and Brijendra are just two of the thousands of migrant workers from UP under enormous mental strain, after losing their jobs. Cash crunch, along with the scare created by the pandemic, and a sense of abandonment, has pushed many into depression. Unable to make peace, some have even taken the extreme step.

Seeking psychological counselling does not come naturally to the poor in India. Yet, 37,681 migrant workers — 30,828 males and 6,853 females — have been extended psychological support so far across UP, says Dinesh Kumar, Child Protection Officer, Unicef. Around 35 lakh workers from across the country have returned to UP since the start of the lockdown.

The Unicef is partnering the state government to provide quick intervention, sending teams of experts across the state. The Indian Psychiatry Society has found an almost 20% rise in mental health issues during the pandemic.

Helpline number

On April 2, the UP government directed mental health workers to counsel those housed in relief camps and quarantine centres. A helpline number 1800-180-5145 was launched. Also, district magistrates of all 75 districts were sent contact details of 75 counsellors to be made available to the public